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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents ideas for establishing a church-sponsored early childhood learning center. The first sections of the booklet describe the rationale for early childhood education and the types of programs which might be developed. The booklet provides a series of suggested steps to take in deciding on a program's feasibility and the steps necessary for the actual opening of a center. The booklet also provides suggestions for equipment and space utilization for both indoor and outdoor play areas. Resources for developing a preschool curriculum are presented and specific ideas for providing a religious program reflecting Lutheran ideals are described. The booklet also includes an annotated bibliography of early childhood books and materials for administrators and teachers. The final section of the booklet includes sample forms for use in developing and establishing a preschool program. These include a sample survey of community interest in and needs for an early childhood program, a sample contract for a teacher or director, an enrollment form, and a family and social history form. (BD)

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to begin with

how to start a church-sponsored early childhood learning center

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to begin with

how to start a church-sponsored early childhood learning center

by Geneva Schenk

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what this book will do

Explore the rationale for early childhood learning centers / 4-5

Take a look at types of centers / 6-7

- Nursery school
- Prekindergarten
- Day care center
- Kindergarten

Provide steps for reaching a decision on a center / 8-9

- Study
- Survey
- Visits
- ALEA
- Licensing requirements
- Objectives
- Contract consultant
- Budget
- IRS
- Presentation
- Decision

Provide steps for opening a center / 10-13

- Staff development
- Set opening date
- Licensing
- Publicity
- Facilities development
- Budget planning
- Program planning

Suggest ways to equip an early childhood learning center / 14-19

- Indoor equipment
- Indoor space
- Outdoor space and equipment

Suggest resources / 20-23

- Supporting agencies
- Curriculum
- Religion program

Provide a bibliography / 24-28

- For administrators
- For teachers
- Catalogs

Include sample forms / 29-32

- Survey form
- Teacher contract
- Information to parents
- Enrollment form
- Family and social history

why an early childhood learning center?

In recent years there has been a great increase of interest in early childhood education. While some of this increase has sprung out of a need to provide day care for children of working mothers and of one-parent families, it is due more to the discovery that people gain half of their growth in height, intelligence, and general learning ability prior to age 6.

What and how children learn in their first few years is basic to their entire life. In those early years children need to learn how to use their bodies, to express themselves, to cope with their feelings and emotions, to get along with other people, to satisfy their curiosity. How well they accomplish these learning tasks affects how they will learn later, how they will feel about themselves, and how they will respond to others.

The home has the primary responsibility for the young child's development. However, young children need children their own age to react to and interact with. Because of the small size of families today, this need often goes unmet. Also, few families with young children today have grandparents living with them, upon whose experience earlier generations of parents could rely. Parents need help. Parents are looking for help.

The church has a unique opportunity to develop outside the home an educational ministry which assists parents in giving young children meaningful interaction with peers, with objective adults, and with an environment rich in learning potential. It can also help parents provide their young children with:

- a Christian atmosphere for spiritual growth;
- a sense of security which is indispensable to good growth —a sense of security children derive from being loved, cared for, praised, accepted, encouraged, and challenged;
- a variety of opportunities for learning;
- freedom to exercise their abilities and potential;
- time to develop at their own growth rate;
- a challenging but non-threatening climate conducive to exploration and discovery;
- tools and resources suited to their individual stages of development.

The following is an example of a congregation's statement of purpose and objectives for an early childhood learning center:

Purposes

We believe that our congregation's life and mission include assisting parents in the development of their children. The early childhood learning center offers young children a Christian setting in which to grow, to learn, and to develop physically, spiritually, intellectually, and socially.

We believe that the early childhood learning center can expand the child's perception of God, of other people, and of the physical world in which God has placed us.

We believe that the Christian early childhood learning center offers preschool children one of the best opportunities for achieving the goals of Christian education outside the home. It can help them develop healthy personalities, form values, develop the conscience, feelings, and attitudes which form the foundation for a positive self-image and good relationships.

We believe that dedicated and committed Christian teachers can provide young children with numerous opportunities for growth and development.

Objectives

- To encourage development of the *whole* child in ways which enable children to be more mature persons and to feel secure in the love of God.
- To teach simple Christian truths related to the child's experiences and level of development.
- To encourage the child in self-confidence, concern for others, cooperation in work and play, and a spirit of sharing.
- To increase the child's skills in listening, self-discipline, conversation, creative self-expression, independent work and play.
- To help parents learn skills which promote the growth and development of their preschool children.

Relationship to the Congregation

The early childhood learning center is an arm of the educational ministry of the congregation. Its student body will include children of the congregation, children of other congregations, and children whose parents have no church affiliation.

The (name of center)admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

This type of statement firmly establishes the early childhood learning center as an integral part of the educational ministry of the congregation. It places the congregation in a strategic position to help children at their own level of development to see themselves as unique persons created by God and loved by our Lord Jesus, to perceive and imitate the example of other Christians, and to sense their own relationship with God through their relationship with God's people.

Since the growth and development of young children's religious concepts are dependent on the growth and quality of their world of experience, the church's early childhood learning program promotes religious development also as it enriches the general experience of children and as it provides such quality experiences as love, acceptance, fair play, imaginative activities, and creative expression.

Most congregations have adequate facilities for weekday use, in addition to dedicated people who are willing to give guidance and support. Working with parents, this leadership can provide quality opportunities for the growth and development of young children. It can lead the congregation in undertaking a mission of advocacy for young children. Through the daily learning program, it can minister to the young children and families of the Christian community and also to those who may not have realized that the church has relevance for their lives.

Leadership by the pastor as well as by the director for Christian education is vital in helping the congregation carry out this ministry to and with preschool children. Through their leadership, the congregation's early childhood learning program will help children explore relationships, experience and deepen their understanding of love, and grow in a sense of responsibility to home and family. Their leadership will plan for differences as well as likenesses in children. It will provide variety in programming and spiritual nurture which facilitates the God-given potential in each child.

types of centers

The early childhood learning center can be one of several types or combinations of types, depending on the needs of the children in a given congregation or community. Here are the most common types of early childhood learning centers:

Nursery school

The nursery school is a school for three- and sometimes four-year-olds. Generally children attend two or three half-days a week. The school's director and staff are dedicated Christians who have had special training for work with young children. They enjoy being with children and create a warm, friendly atmosphere in the classroom. They provide a setting which encourages children to ask questions, to investigate, to experiment, to explore, to make choices, and to be creative.

The nursery school welcomes parents. It encourages them to observe sessions at certain times, to make suggestions, and to participate in parent meetings. At times the school asks parents to assist with such activities as field trips, outings, picnics, and special programs.

The nursery school's program includes enough variety to stimulate children and enough routine to give them a sense of security. It includes a genuine concern for the spiritual life of the children and their parents. In every way possible it identifies with the life and mission of the congregation.

The nursery school protects and promotes the child's health and nutrition. Its program provides a balance between activity and rest. It cooperates with other community agencies with like interests and concerns for young children.

Prekindergarten

Terms for various early childhood programs are not always discrete. In some cases the terms "nursery school," "prekindergarten," and "preschool" are used interchangeably. In other cases—and in some states—the legal definition of "prekindergarten" is an early childhood learning center for four-year-olds only, or more precisely, for children who will enter kindergarten the following year. In other respects, what has been said about nursery school also applies to prekindergarten.

Day care center

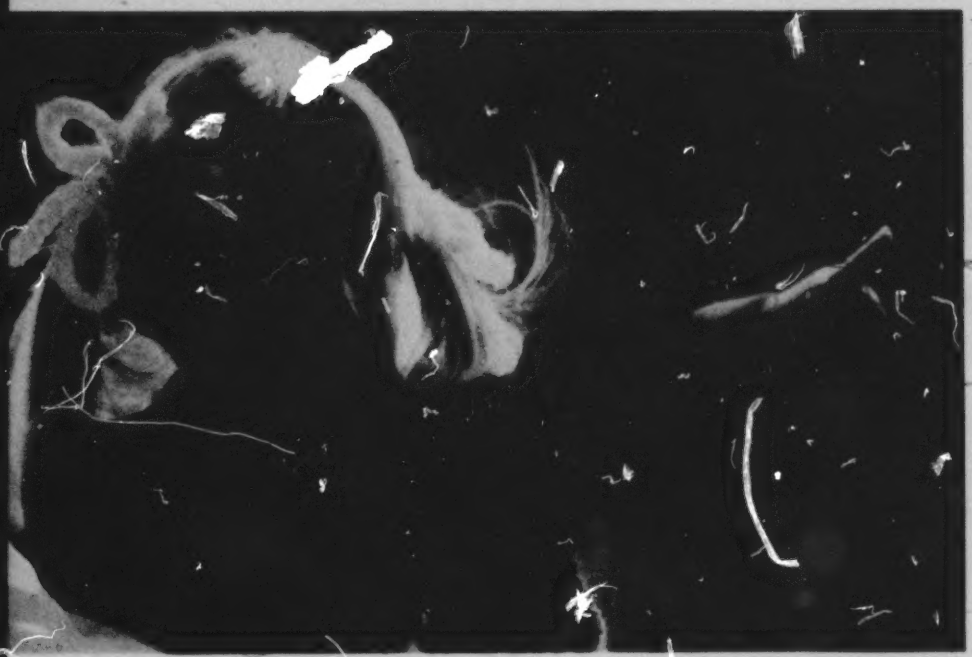
A congregation sponsors a day care center to provide quality care and protection for children of working parents for all or part of the day. Through the center it also provides planned educational experiences which promote the children's intellectual, physical, and spiritual development. These educational experiences are similar to those offered in other early childhood learning centers. Children may be enrolled at age two and attend until age six. The hours in attendance will vary, but a child could be in a day care center for eight or nine hours a day. Lunch and naps are provided. Generally, day care centers operate either five or six days a week, depending on the work schedule of parents. They may need to operate also during the summer.

Kindergarten

The Christian kindergarten provides a group learning experience for five-year-olds, with emphasis on the individual needs of the child. Generally children attend five half-days a week, though a growing number attend five full-days a week. The program should be coordinated with the Christian day school or the local public school in order to provide a readiness program for the children.

The readiness program may include phonics, math concepts, science, social studies, experiences in listening, activities for developing the large and small muscles, exercises in visual perception, music, and rhythmic responses. The kindergarten is open during the regular school year and usually follows the local school district calendar. Information concerning the organization and development of a church-sponsored kindergarten may be obtained from the office of the Director for Christian Day Schools, the American Lutheran Church, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa 55067.*

* *Since PROJECT: YOUNG CHILD is purchasing copies of this book in quantity for use by congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we include here the address Missouri Synod congregations should write to: Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Schools, the Board of Parish Education, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. 63118.*



step-by-step—from idea to decision

The congregation should appoint a survey committee. This committee might consist of parents of young children, professional church staff, and congregational education leaders. It should receive sufficient funds to carry out its work, especially Steps 2 and 7. Steps for this committee to undertake are:

1 *Study* The committee should familiarize itself with the concept of an early childhood learning center.

2 *Survey* The committee should assess the need for an early childhood learning center and determine the type of center needed. It should survey the congregational membership, neighboring congregations, and local community. It can do this by door-to-door canvassing, by handbill questionnaires, by phoning licensing agencies, and by asking neighboring centers if they have a waiting list. Be alert for needs. For example, if many working parents require day care for their children in addition to a nursery school, determine whether the community has such day care centers and whether children who would be enrolled in a contemplated nursery school can be transported to and handled by the day care center. See page 28 for a sample survey form.

3 *Visits* The committee should visit early childhood centers in the area and become familiar with their programs.

4 *ALEA* The committee should contact the American Lutheran Education Association, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa 50677, for further information concerning nursery schools, prekindergarten and kindergartens. (See footnote, page 7.)

5 *Licensing requirements.* The committee should make a study of the adequacy of the church's facilities for licensing purposes. The licensing agency will vary from state to state, as will the licensing requirements. In addition to facility requirements, the licensing agency may stipulate the pupil-teacher ratio and the educational credentials of the cen-

ter's director. Write or call your state's Department of Education or Department of Welfare or Department of Public Health. An inspection by the local fire department may also be required. Existing facilities can usually be remodeled to meet state and county or city requirements. Attention must be given to the size of rooms, lavatory and kitchen facilities, types of interior finishes, exits, fenced-in play yards, and potential hazards. Classrooms located on the second floor and use of stairways may call for installation of special safety features. Develop a cost estimate for all additions, remodeling, or fire warning systems that may be required.

6 *Objectives*

Develop a statement of purpose and objectives for the early childhood learning center, relating it to the educational ministry of the congregation. (See sample, page 5.)

7 *Contract consultant*

The committee may wish to engage an area early-childhood education consultant to evaluate the committee's progress to this point and to offer counsel concerning the remaining steps. To engage such a consultant, write: Director for Early Childhood Ministries, Division for Life and Mission in the Congregation, the American Lutheran Church, 422 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis, Minn. 55415. Or call toll-free (800) 328-7185. In Minnesota call collect (612) 338-3821. The Division for Life and Mission in the Congregation maintains a network of 11 consultants, located in various areas of the country. The contracting congregation is responsible for the consultant's transportation and housing expenses. The Division for Life and Mission will pay the consultant for the time involved.

(Missouri Synod congregations should contact their synodical district education office for the name of the consultant in their district and for the method of contracting the consultant's services.)

8 *Budget*

The committee should prepare a tentative operating budget for the center. The budget should include administration costs, compensation for director and teachers, educational equipment and supplies, and in-service development and training of staff. The budget should show potential income from tuition, special contributions, and congregational support. (See page 13 for further information on budget planning.)

9 *IRS.*

The committee should contact the Internal Revenue Service and obtain a copy of Revenue Procedure 75-50, which deals with non-discriminatory policies. Failure of a center to adopt such a policy could jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the center and the sponsoring congregation.

10 *Presentation*

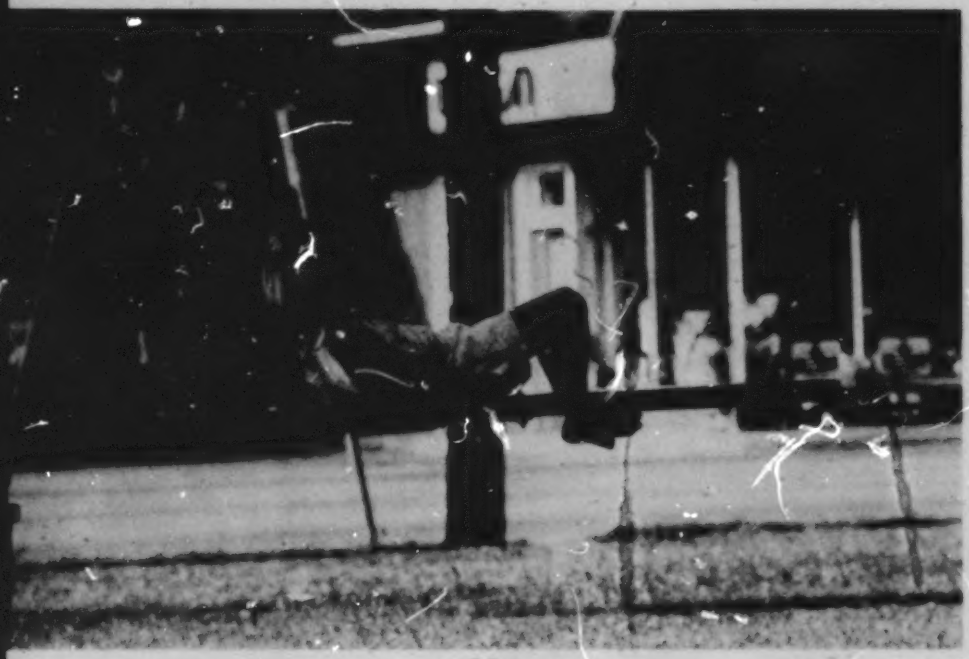
The committee should present an overall plan for the center to the congregation and/or church council. This plan should include:

- Results of the survey.
- A description of the type of center and how it would carry out the mission and ministry of the congregation as it relates to the results of the survey.
- A congregational statement of purpose and objectives for the center (see page 5 for a sample).
- Details of facility requirements for licensing, including cost estimates for any necessary remodeling.
- A tentative budget for operating the center, based on partial and full enrollment potential and income potential from tuition, contributions, and congregational support.

11 *Decision*

The committee should call for the congregation's decision regarding the early childhood learning center. If the congregation approves the proposed center, it should:

- Adopt a non-discriminatory policy for the center.
- Appoint or elect a permanent board to supervise the center. This board should be the congregation's board of Christian education (or whatever other name this board is called) or a special center committee with representation on the church council. The makeup of the center committee should be similar to that of the survey committee (see page 8).
- Appoint a development committee. The same people who are on the survey committee could be appointed to the development committee since the survey committee has now completed its task.
- Appropriate money for any necessary remodeling which the development committee will need for opening the center or until the center can generate income through its own sources.



step-by-step—from decision to opening

With the approval of the congregation, the development committee should proceed with the steps necessary to open the early childhood learning center. These include:

1 *Staff development*
Keeping in mind any licensing requirements, the development committee should begin the search for a director trained in early childhood education. This person should be a dedicated Christian—preferably a trained Lutheran, have experience in a church-related setting, and be able to give spiritual leadership to the center, its staff, and the children. These qualifications are important if the center is to carry out its objectives and be part of the mission and ministry of the congregation. High standards and proper procedures need to be followed in the selection and calling of the director and teaching staff. If it is anticipated that the center will have less than 40 children to begin with, the director may also serve on the teaching staff.

Interviews should be conducted by the committee and pastor. Interviews for teaching personnel should be conducted by the committee, pastor, and center director. Personnel policies relating to the objectives of the center, job descriptions, in-service training, vacation and sick leave should all be discussed with prospective staff persons. (See sample contract on page 29.)

2 *Set opening date*
The committee should set a tentative opening date for the center based on the steps necessary for licensing and remodeling.

3 *Licensing*
The committee should complete all licensing requirements. These will vary from state to state as will the agency which does the licensing. See Licensing Requirements, page 8.

4 *Publicity*
The committee and director should begin a public relations program within the congregation and community. Prepare an attractive brochure for distribution. Use the newspapers, yellow pages, local radio stations, and personal contacts to build an enrollment for the center. Allow plenty of time to

make these preparations. It may take from three months to a year to reach a starting date for the center. Plan and work carefully toward that date.

All publicity should contain the non-discrimination statement required by the IRS form, Revenue Procedure 75-50.

5 *Developing the facilities*

The committee should carry out any expansion, remodeling, or other adjustments of the facilities to prepare them for the center's opening. The following may require attention:

- SPACE. For active play and quiet time young children need at least 35 square feet per child indoors and 75 to 100 square feet outdoors. Color, texture, and light are important elements in creating space. Space requirements vary from state to state. Check with the licensing agency in your state.
- ACOUSTICAL CONTROL. Since noise tends to excite and tire children and staff, every means should be used to reduce and control sound. Ceilings may be treated with sound-absorbent materials and carpeting used to create quiet areas. Curtains and wall tapestries also absorb noise.
- SAFETY. In planning rooms and play yards for children, build in safeguards. Mark exits well, round corners on shelves and tables, install shatterproof glass in windows that reach within four feet of the floor, and fence the outdoor play area.
- VENTILATION AND LIGHT. Give special consideration to heating and ventilation. Fresh, airy rooms with soft but good lighting are conducive to a cheery atmosphere.

- STORAGE. Provide plenty of low, open, movable shelving units in which the children can store toys and supplies and to which the children can have easy access. The movable feature allows the units to serve as space dividers. Ordinarily, centers in a church must share space with the Sunday church school and other groups. Storage for each group is a critical factor. Movable shelving units can solve potential problems.

  Equipment must be stored in locked cabinets or store rooms when the center is not in operation. In addition, storage space must be planned for program supplies, children's personal possessions, and the teacher's personal items.
- CUSTODIAL SERVICES. These need to be planned carefully with the church council maintenance committee. Such services are especially important for the transition from the weekday to the Sunday program and for the "get-ready" Monday morning tasks at the center.
- PLAY YARD. The play yard should be located adjacent to the classrooms if possible. Ideally, the children should be able to move in and out during the session through wide, sliding doors. If this is not possible, movement to and from the yard should be made safe for young children. The yard should have level areas, and, if possible, a gently sloping mound for climbing, rolling, and sledding. It should have shady and sunny areas and several types of surfacing, such as grass and asphalt. Large equipment for climbing and sliding require a resilient surface. Swings need canvas

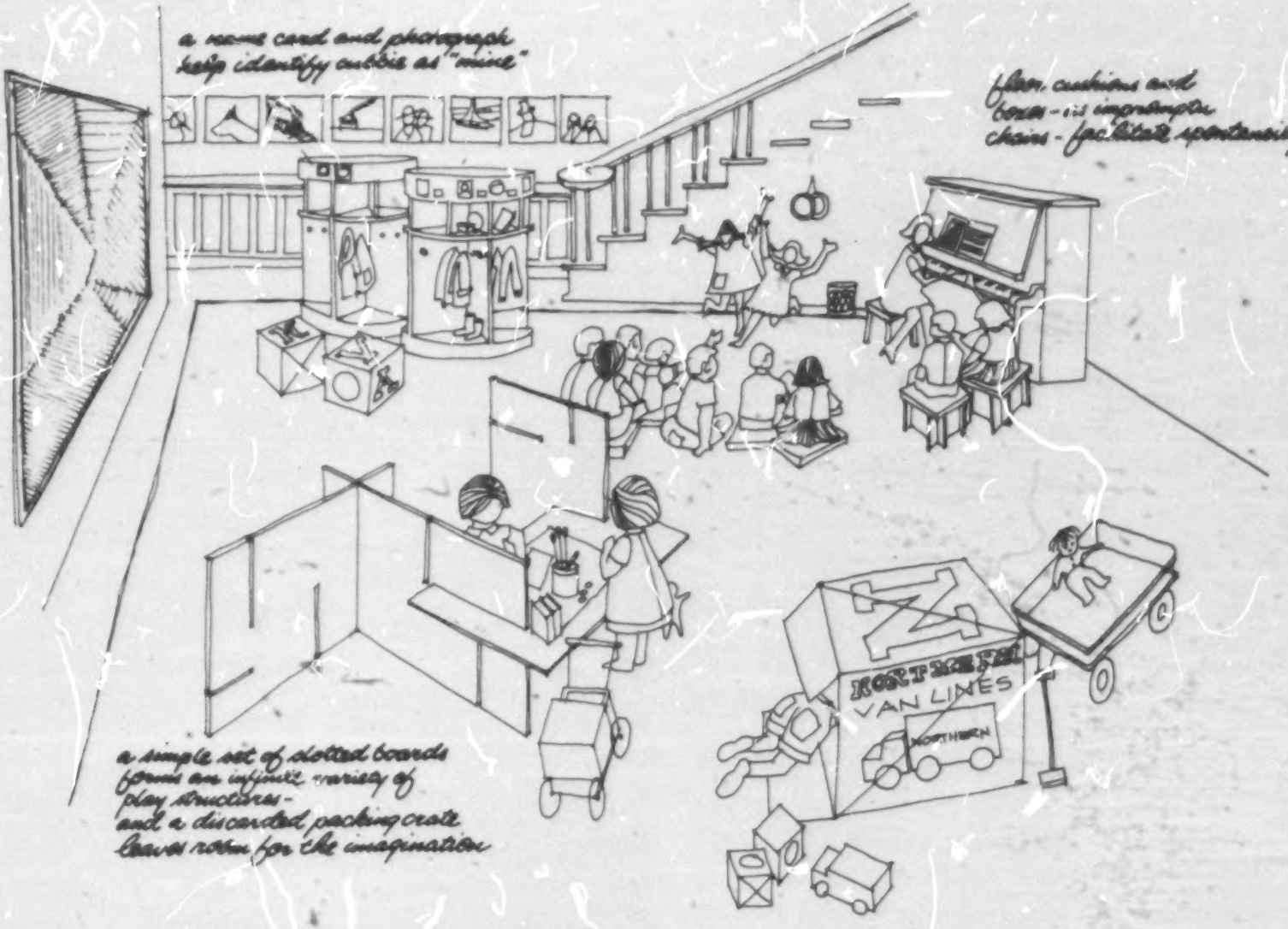
11

coat storage - near the entrance - should provide a place for keeping private things

a name card and photograph help identify cubbie as "mine"

a place for more active activities where the high ceiling and sloping floor encourage exhilaration

fabric cushions and boxes - fill impromptu chairs - facilitate spontaneity



a simple set of slotted boards forms an infinite variety of play structures - and a discarded packing crate leaves room for the imagination

seats for safety. A playhouse in the yard may double as a storage shed for tricycles, wagons, and outdoor toys.

6 *Budget planning* Sound fiscal management is a necessity for the center. The development committee should work with the center committee in establishing the budget. They should include program costs and compensation for all full-time, part-time, or shared-time staff on the payroll, that is, for all persons from whom federal and state taxes will be withheld. Anyone who is paid for more than 35 hours per week is considered a full-time employee. Compensation includes salaries, employer's share of Social Security tax, Workmen's Compensation, health insurance, vacation, sick leave, paid substitutes, overtime, and professional development. Include liability insurance in the budget. This will protect the congregation against lawsuits resulting from negligence on the part of center employees or from negligent conditions on the premises. Consider limits of $100,000 to $300,000 for this protection and $5000 for property damage.

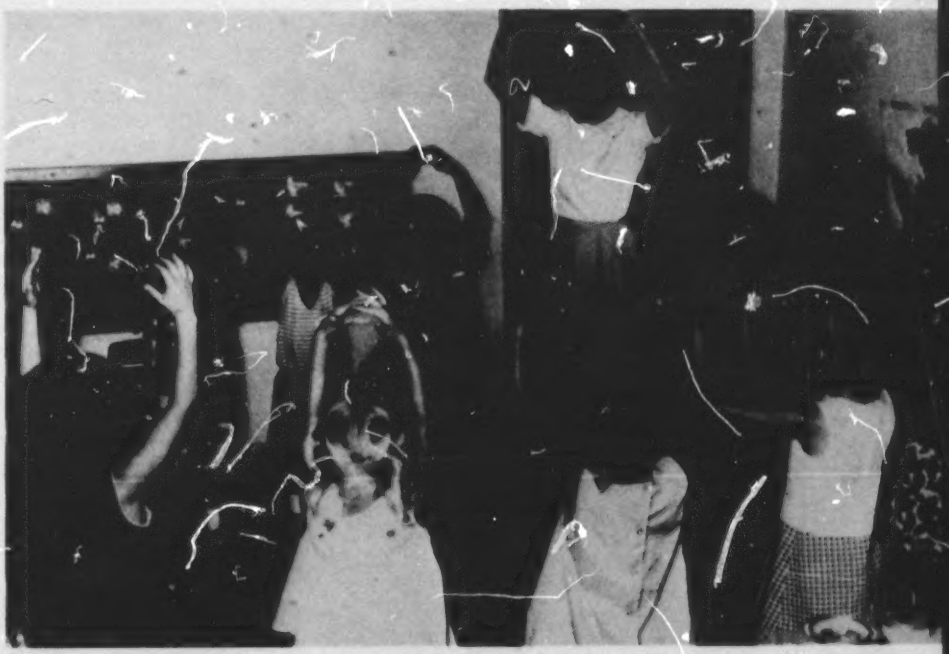
Program Planning

Program planning should be done by the director, teaching staff, and the center committee. The program will depend on the type of center planned, whether nursery school, prekindergarten, day care center, or kindergarten. The following illustration of what a nursery school schedule might look like is included only by way of example:

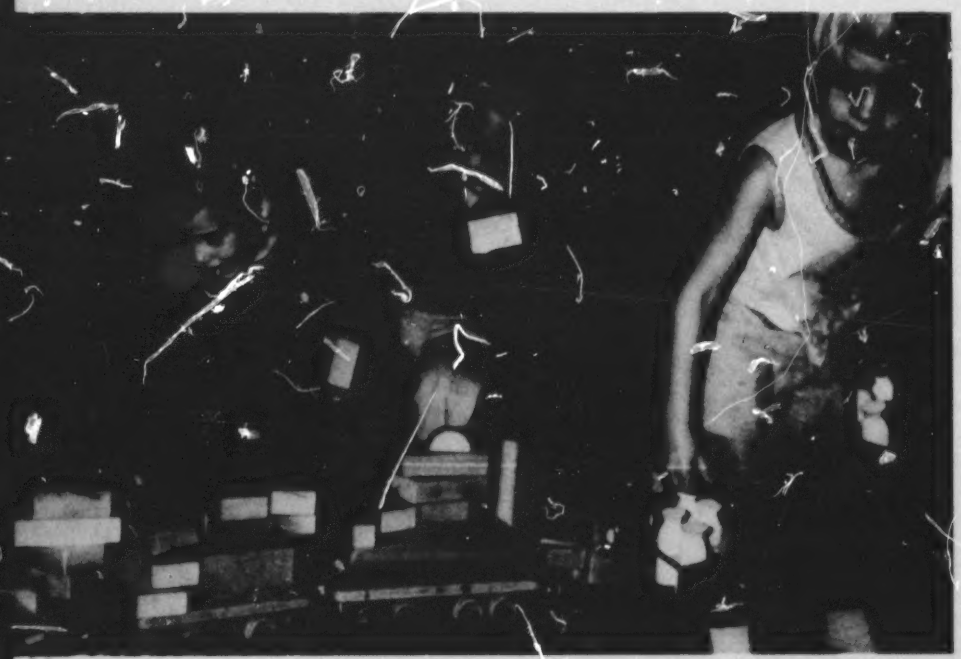
8:30- 9:15 free choice of creative activities
9:15- 9:30 indoor recreation
9:30-10:00 religion, worship, and music
10:00-10:15 table prayer and snack time
10:15-10:30 rest time
10:30-11:00 circle time (varies in length and activity depending on the mood of the group)

- songs
- rhythmic movement
- stories
- exploration in science
- finger plays
- drama
- creative art
- poetry
- riddles
- learning shapes
- questions/answers
- show and tell
- identification of colors, objects, etc.

11:00-11:30 play yard
11:30 home



Whatever the type of program, the children in the center should sense that in the staff they have Christian friends. Teachers should watch for every opportunity to relate the experiences, discoveries, and happenings of the day to God, so the children become aware of God's love and find this expressed also in the teachers' relationship with them. The entire session should be a learning and growing experience, not in a forced but in a natural way. Since the center may be the child's first experience in the educational program of the church, it should be a happy experience—for both child and parents. It can then be the beginning of many years of Christian growth in the teaching agencies of the congregation.



equipping the center

When developing a list of equipment for the operation of the early childhood learning center, a congregation should consider function, health, safety, cost, learning value, relationship to program, and space available.

For safety purposes, exercise care in purchasing and receiving donations of equipment and supplies. Check the contents of materials for combustion level, toxicity, strength, general construction, and washability. All purchases should follow carefully established guidelines which provide for a system of record-keeping and budget responsibility.

Not all this equipment needs to be purchased or provided when the center first opens. It is possible to start with a few basic pieces and add equipment as the center grows.

Indoor Equipment

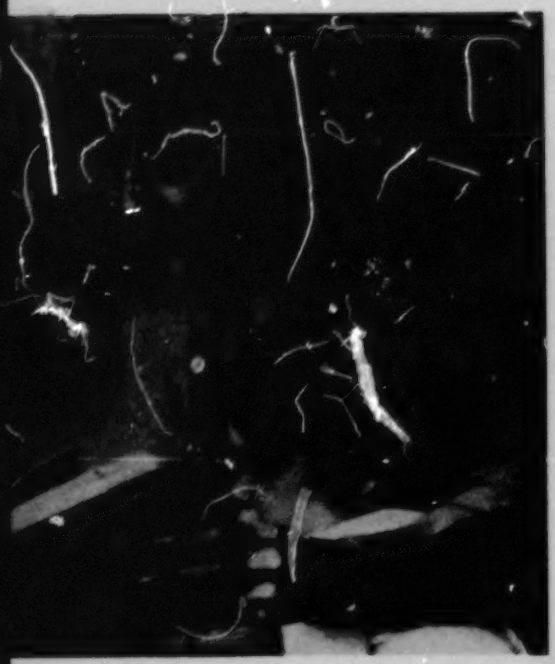
The following list is organized around activity centers:

Block area

- Carpeting for the block area
- Low shelves for different types of materials
- Blocks, including wooden unit blocks, large hollow-blocks and corrugated cardboard blocks
- Cartons to serve as large blocks. Use boxes with dividers inside, and tape them shut.
- Sturdy cars and trucks of different sizes
- Toy animals—rubber, plastic, wooden, or stuffed. These should be washable.
- Cardboard of different lengths found in the inner core of fabric bolts
- Carpet samples for children to arrange as they choose
- Old bedspread, blanket, or light tarp for making houses, tents, and caves
- Large furniture- or refrigerator carton. Cut out windows and door for a playhouse

Art area

- One or two easels, brushes, paint
- Newsprint. Check local newspaper for roll ends.
- Paper, crayon, pencils, chalk, paste
- Blunt-end scissors for right and left hand
- Play-dough, modeling clay, and fingerpaint



- Picture magazines, yarn, cloth scraps and other odds and ends for collage designs and art projects

Housekeeping corner

- Toy kitchen appliances: sink, stove, refrigerator, cupboard. These can be made from cartons, crates, or finished lumber
- Tables and chairs, children's size
- Doll bed, doll, and doll clothes
- Clothing chest or hooks on wall for dress-up clothes. Hooks should be placed about 12 inches above child's eye level
- Dress-up clothes and accessories, including tools, hats, flashlight, wallets, handbags, scarves
- Doll dishes—pots, pans, utensils, empty food containers
- Toy telephones
- Two inexpensive walkie-talkie radios
- Doll pillows, blankets

Water and sand play

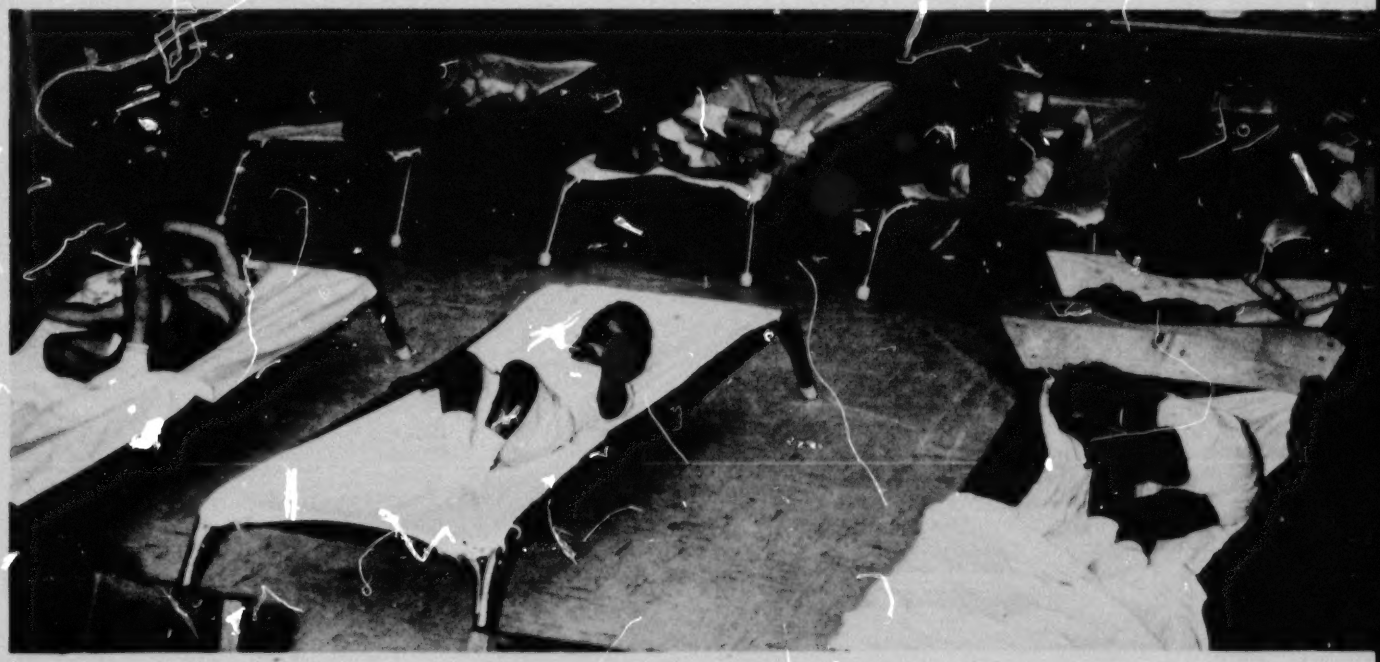
- Water table and floating toys
- Sand table or sand box
- Devices for pouring, sifting, and measuring, such as funnels, metal cups, spoons, wooden bowls, and strainers
- Paint brushes, two to four inches wide

Book corner

- Children's story and picture books. Christian growth materials appropriate to this age level
- Children's table and chairs or cushions

Table toys

- Sturdy, inlay puzzles of varied difficulty
- Assorted table toys: early learning kits, peg pounder, number sorter, snap blocks, trains and tracks, cars, pegboard and pegs, large beads for stringing



Dramatic-play materials
- Props for playing vocational roles such as mail carrier, doctor, pastor, nurse, teacher, carpenter, and farmer
- Puppets

Science corner
- Tables with shelves or drawers
- Balance scale
- Magnets
- Magnifying glass
- Measuring devices: ruler, measuring cups and spoons; beans and sand for pouring
- Seeds to grow and containers for soil
- Things to take apart: clocks, keys and locks, nuts and bolts
- Nature collections of leaves, rocks, flowers, bark, and shells

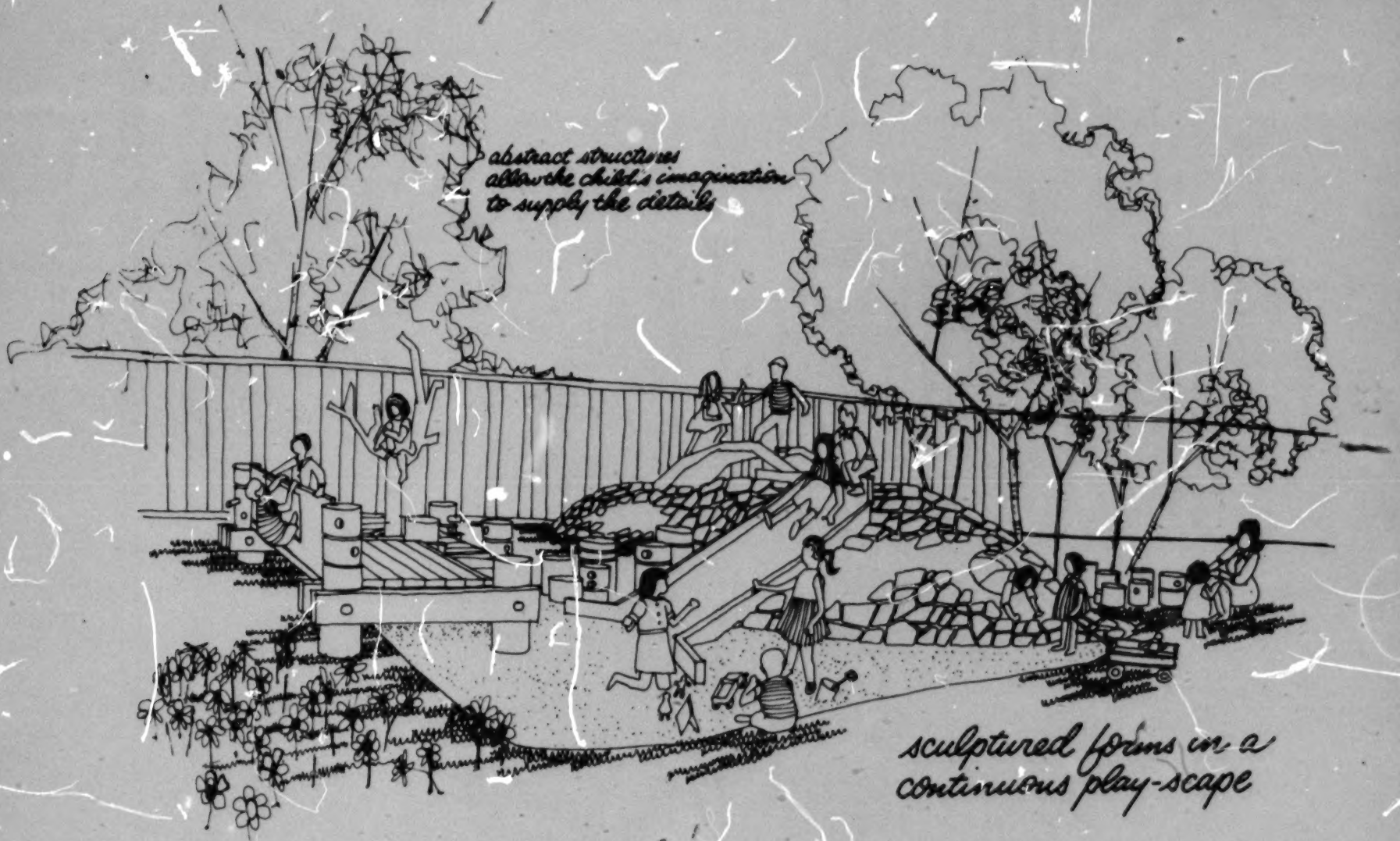
Large-muscle activity area
- Climbing apparatus
- Mat or mattress
- Ride-on cars or trucks
- Large ball and bean bags

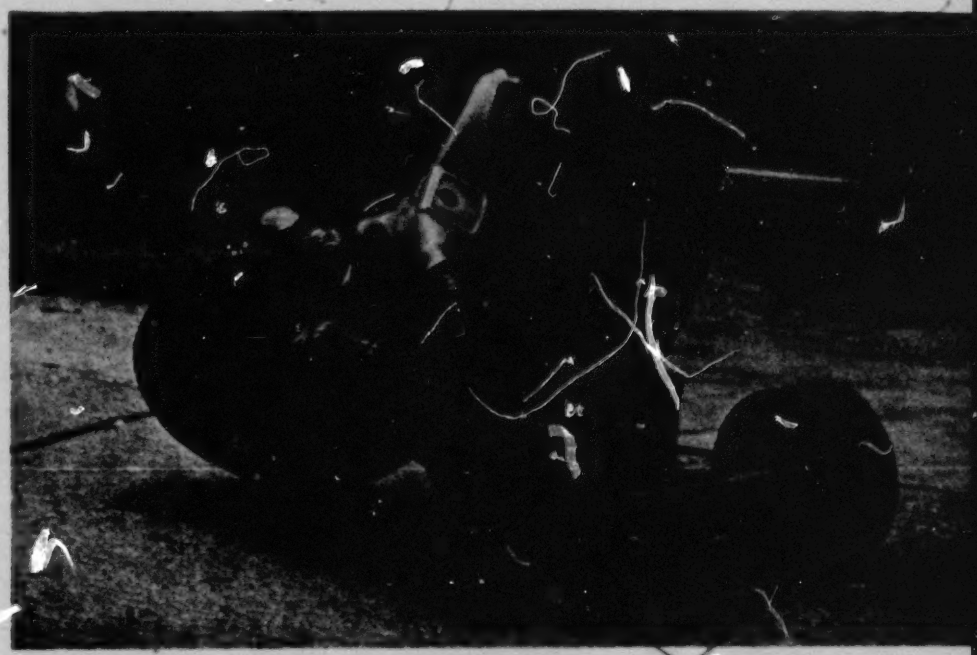
Music corner
- Rhythm instruments for children, purchased or homemade
- Record player for teacher and, if possible, one for children
- Records for marching, rhythmic movement, singing, listening
- Piano and/or autoharp

Manual arts corner
- Workbench
- Pieces of styrofoam and corrugated cardboard; toy tools to use with these, and golf tees for nails; also wood scraps, real tools and nails

Rest area (for day care centers)
- Cots that are light-weight and stackable; sheets and blankets

Note: All equipment should be versatile, moveable, and easily stored, and should work toward the aims and goals of the program.


abstract structures
allow the child's imagination
to supply the details
sculptured forms in a
continuous play-scape



Indoor Space

In planning the indoor space, the congregation should keep in mind the room's shape and dimensions, the kind of equipment that will be used in it, and the other groups which will use the space on Sundays.

Open space without boundaries invites running and wrestling. Natural "paths" can guide children from one area to another so that they walk around other activities instead of through them. Separate noisy areas from quiet ones. Use rugs to muffle noise. Prepare a quiet, cozy corner for reading, resting or just being alone for awhile. Arrange transition areas with quiet, less overwhelming activities near the entrance in order to make the transition from home to the center or from outdoor play to indoor less abrupt.

A room in which activity areas are separated from each other will probably have a less pressured atmosphere for both teachers and children. Arrange related areas near each other for cooperative activities. For example, arrange the housekeeping corner near the block area. Then children in both areas can join together in dramatic play. Activities placed in this way may "merge" in unanticipated but delightful ways.

Outdoor Space and Equipment

Here are some creative ideas for the outdoor play yard:

Prepare a grassy hill for climbing, rolling, and possibly sledding. Attach four feet of garden hose to a post for a filling station. Build a low, wooden fence for climbing over and under. Build a play house and equip it with chairs and tables. Supply a large assortment of packing boxes for trains, planes, and boats. Make outdoor tables from industrial wire spools. Place a basketball hoop and backboard low on a post. Provide brightly painted planks for free play. Build sawhorses about 24 inches high for use with planks. Mount the steering wheel from a car on a box for a make-believe vehicle. Build a jungle gym. Provide both sunny and shady areas.

19

The congregation need not stand alone or shift for itself in conducting an early childhood learning center. A number of agencies provide help, and resources are available in the area of curriculum, both in the general area and in the teaching of religion.

resources

Agencies that Support Early Childhood Education

- The American Lutheran Education Association,* Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa 50677

The ALEA offers teachers, administrators, and pastors of congregations which operate preschools and elementary schools many services that help them make their schools distinctively Christian. It also links them with their counterparts in other areas of the country. Among the benefits ALEA offers to members are the following:

1. An Introductory Packet for Prekindergartens containing operational guidelines, religious education materials, and samples of what other prekindergartens are doing.
2. An annual follow-up packet of materials with new ideas and resources.
3. The loan of the color film, "The Small World of the Nursery School" at no cost, for use with parents.
4. An annual four-day preservice workshop, conducted twice each summer at an ALC college. This workshop is for teachers who are just beginning their work in a church-related school.
5. An annual two-day in-service workshop for teachers and directors. They participate in swap-shop and workshop sessions with teachers of other Lutheran preschools.
6. A triennial four-day workshop for directors and pastors to plan ahead for bigger and better things.
7. A director's one-day conference for areas where we have clusters of schools, such as in southern California. These conferences are held several times a year.
8. The option to join a group accident insurance program for preschoolers.
9. Subscriptions to educational journals such as *Lutheran Education.*
10. The loan of a filmstrip with cassette tape featuring a successful ALC early childhood center.

11. A policy manual for the operation of a Lutheran preschool.

The LEA (Lutheran Education Association) Department of Early Childhood Education offers somewhat similar services for teachers of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. For information, write: LEA, DECE, Concordia Teachers College, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, Ill. 60305.

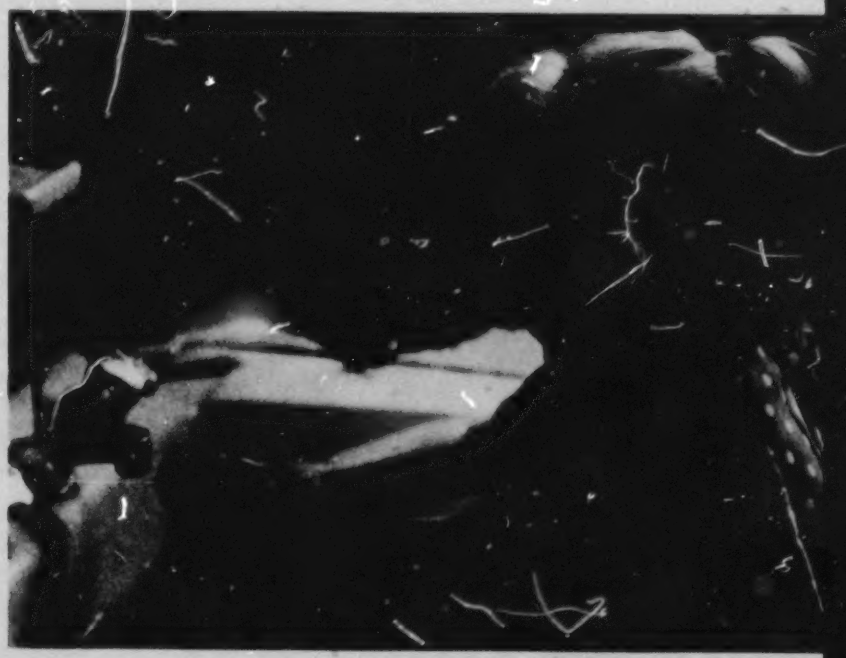
- The National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009
- Association for Childhood Education International, 3516 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016
- Day Care and Child Developmental Council of America, 1401 K St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005
- National Association of Christian Schools, Box 550, Wheaton, Ill. 60187

General Curriculum

The center director, center committee, and congregational board of Christian education should work together to determine the specific objectives of the learning program. These objectives in turn, should determine the nature of the curriculum. A resource that can be of significant help:

Educational Product Report Number 42 (Early Childhood Education—How to Select and Evaluate Materials) 1972. Order from: EPIE, 386 Park Ave. S., New York, N.Y. 10016

This book provides an apparatus to help early childhood educators clarify their assumptions and objectives and study their options. Though the book analyzes various packaged curricula and helps planners find a packaged curriculum compatible with their objectives, it does not suggest that a packaged curriculum must be used. The chief value of the book lies in helping planners to be aware of different educational points of view and to clarify their own thinking concerning these. Such clarification can only benefit all curriculum planners. Warning: This book is not simple. It will require serious thought. EPIE may have a more up-to-date report on selecting and evaluating early childhood education materials. Do inquire.



Religion Program

A religion curriculum has been developed specifically for Lutheran preschools and day care centers. This is the MISSION: LIFE Blue Program for kindergartens and prekindergartens. The courses provide material for up to five days a week. Developed in cooperation with the American Lutheran Church, they are published by Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63118. Course titles:

Ages 3 and 4 (prekindergarten):

Me and All Creatures
(fall quarter)

That I May Be His
(winter quarter)

Newness of Life
(spring quarter)

Age 5 (kindergarten):

Joyfully Alive (fall quarter)

Alive Together
(winter quarter)

Always Alive
(spring quarter)

Each quarter's material consists of a reusable teacher's kit containing a teacher's guide and such teaching aids as filmstrips, records, posters, flannelgraph, and storybooks; also of learner's packets, one being needed for each pupil. All courses are designed to help the child know God as Father and Jesus as personal helper and friend. Bible stories are integrated into the child's world of experiences, so that the child perceives God as a present reality and not as a being who inhabited only a bygone age.

Some centers use religion materials which were really designed for one-hour a week church school settings. Creative teachers can adapt these for use in some weekday early childhood learning centers. If your center chooses to do this, be sure that it does not use the same materials used by your Sunday church school. Otherwise pupils enrolled in both programs will be going through the same materials twice. What follows are several Lutheran church school curricula which a creative, experienced teacher may be able to adapt for use in an early childhood learning center.

Augsburg Publishing House, 426 S. Fifth St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55415, offers the *Bible Storytime* curriculum, a closely-graded uniform series for ages 3, 4, and 5. Each age level is divided into three trimesters. During Trimesters A and B all three age levels have their own storybooks and class activity kits but share a common teacher's guide. During Trimester C (summer) all three age levels use identical materials, though the teacher's guide continues to offer different suggestions for each age level. The unit titles for all age levels are:

Trimester A
- Unit 1 *We Learn about God*
- Unit 2 *God Made Our World*
- Unit 3 *God Provides for Us*
- Unit 4 *God Gave Us Baby Jesus*

Trimester B
- Unit 5 *Jesus Grew Up*
- Unit 6 *Jesus Began His Work*
- Unit 7 *Jesus Loves Us*
- Unit 8 *Jesus Is Our Savior*

Trimester C (Summer)
- Unit 9 *I Listen to God*
- Unit 10 *I Sing to God*
- Unit 11 *I Learn about Jesus*
- Unit 12 *I Tell about Jesus*

Parish Life Press, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, Penn. 19129, offers four- to seven-session courses for 3, 4, and 5 year-olds. These contain a less Bible story oriented approach to young children.

For age 3 some of the course titles are *Children in God's Family* and *Now We Are Three.* Courses for ages 4 and 5 include *Children of a Loving God, Jesus Taught that You Matter,* and *God's Children in God's World.* The director of the center can choose from the wide range of short courses offered and integrate these into the center's daily program.

bibliography

• For the Committee and Administrators

Aitken, Margaret H. *Play Environment for Children: Play Space, Improvised Equipment and Facilities.* Educational Designs and Consultants, 3259 North Shore Rd., Bellingham, Wash.

Practical and specific helps. Increases awareness of the need for improved play and movement experiences for children. "How-to-make" equipment and commercial sources.

Baker, Katherine B., ed. *Ideas that Work with Young Children.* National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), 1972. 1834 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 10009. Topics include understanding children, teaching, and setting up a learning environment.

Beyer, Evelyn. *Teaching Young Children.* Pegasus, 1968. Practical guide for new teachers and parents. Information on program, child development, and trends in early childhood education.

Carmichael, Clark, Leonhard. *Administration of Schools for Young Children.* SCAEYC, PO Box 631, Sierre Madre, Calif. 91024.

Cherry, Clare. *Nursery School Management. Guide.* 1973. Lear Siegler, Inc./Fearon Publishers, Belmont, Calif.

Croft, Doreen J. and Hess, Robert D. *An Activities Handbook for Teachers of Young Children.* Houghton Mifflin, 1972.

Ellison, Gail. *When Kids and Cardboard Collide.* Environment Teacher Center, 4940 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, Calif. 90230.

Evans, E. Belle, et al. *Day Care: How to Plan, Develop and Operate a Day Care Center.* Beacon Press, 1971. A basic guide for setting up a day care center. Covers all areas of the program.

Found Spaces and Equipment for Children's Centers. A report from Educational Facilities Laboratories (EFL), 1972. Copies available from EFL, 477 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

A highly visual look at space, furniture, and equipment requirements of a day care center.

Furth. *Piaget for Teachers.* Prentice-Hall, 1970.
Practical implications of Piaget's theory concerning the intellectual development of children.

Hewes, Dorothy and Hartman, Barbara. *Early Childhood Education: A Workbook for Administrators.* R and E Research Association. 4843 Mission St., San Francisco, Calif. 94112.

The Idea Box NAEYC.
A collection of manuals suitable for helping organize a preschool program.

Kohl, Herbert. *The Open Classroom.* Vintage Books, 1974. Stress on individualized learning.

Marzollo, Jean and Lloyd. *Learning through Play.* Harper and Row, 1972.
Describes the relationship between play and learning. Helps directors and teachers see the aims of, and methods to use in, early childhood education.

Monahan, Robert. *Free and Inexpensive Materials for Preschool and Early Childhood.* Lear Siegler, Inc./Fearon Publishers, 1973.

Preschool Guide, 1968. Colorado Association of Future Homemakers of America, 207 State Services Building, Denver, Colo. 80203.
Suggestions for setting up a program for children ages 3 through 5, how to conduct the program, how to make equipment, etc.

• Books for Teachers

Ilg, Frances L. and Ames, Louise Bates. *Child Behavior.* Harper and Row, 1955.

Anderson, Robert H. and Shane, Harold G. *As the Twig Is Bent.* Houghton Mifflin, 1971.

Brearley, Molly, ed. *The Teaching of Young Children.* Schocken Books, 1970.

Cherry, Clare. *Creative Movement for the Developing Child* (revised edition). Fearon Publishers, 1971.

Cherry, Clare. *Creative Art for the Developing Child.* Lear Siegler Inc./Fearon Publishers, 1972.

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Hildebrand, Verna. *Building Young Children.* Macmillan, 1975.

Hildebrand, Verna. *Introduction to Early Childhood Education.* MacMillan, 1971.

Hirsch, Elizabeth. *The Block Book,* NAEYC, 1974.

Honig, Alice S. *Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Education.* NAEYC, 1975.

Kraft, Arthur. *The Living Classroom.* Harper and Row, 1975.

Landrath, Catherine. *Preschool Learning and Teaching.* Harper and Row, 1972.

Rudolph, Marguerita. *From Hand to Head.* McGraw-Hill, 1973.

Sava, Samuel G. *Learning through Discovery for Young Children.* McGraw-Hill, 1975.

Haystead, Wesley. *You Can't Begin Too Soon.* Regal, 1974.

Stone, Jeanette G. *Play and Playgrounds.* NAEYC, 1970.

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Early Years. Allen Raymond, Inc., PO Box 1223, Darien, Conn. 06820.

• Teaching Helps

Sharing Music (Music for Young Americans), 2nd Edition. American Book Co.

Let's Cook Today (Early Childhood Cooking Experiences). Child Focus Co., 1230 Keats St., Manhattan Beach, Calif. 90266.
Easy foods for children to make plus social study unit.

Gregg, Elizabeth. *What to Do When There's Nothing to Do.* Dell, 1968.
601 tested play ideas for young children.

Cole, Ann. Haas, Carolyn. Bushnell, Faith. Weinberger, Betty. *I Saw a Purple Cow.* Little, Brown, and Co., 1972.
Art and creative activity ideas.

The Rainy Day Record and Another Rainy Day Record. Rhythm Time #1. Bowmar Records, Inc., 622 Bodier Drive, Glendale, Calif. 91201.

Children's Creative Play Songs #1. Stepping Tones Records, PO Box 64334, Los Angeles, Calif. 90064.

Dance-A-Story Records. RCA Records.

Mod Marches, Modern Tunes for Rhythms and Instruments. Also, *Getting to Know Myself.* Hap Palmer Records. Children's Music Center, Inc., 5373 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90019.
Available on record or cassette.

• Catalogs

Beckley Cardy, 1900 Narragansett, Chicago, Ill. 60639.

Bowmar, 622 Bodier Dr., Glendale, Calif. 91201.

CCM Threshold Learning, Inc., 260 Heights Rd., Box 2000, Darien, Conn. 06820.

Community Playthings, Rifton, N.Y. 12471.

Constructive Playthings, 1040 E. 85th St., Kansas City, Mo. 64131.

Learning Research Center, Portland, Ore. 97223.

Game Time, Inc., Litchfield, Mich. 49252.

The Kids' Stuff Catalog. Incentive Publications, Inc., 2400 Crestmoor Drive, Nashville, Tenn. 37205.

Reading with Your Child through Age 5. The Child Study Association of America, 9 E. 89th St., New York, N.Y. 10028.

Your Multimedia Invitation to the World of Children's Literature. Western Woods, Weston, Conn. 06880.

Form for House to House Survey

_____ (name) _____ Lutheran Church is conducting a survey to determine community needs in the area of early childhood education and care. We would appreciate a minute or two of your time to help us answer a few questions.

Do you have any children below age 6? _____ (If not, thank the person for her of his help and leave. If the answer to the above was yes, continue with the other questions.)

Ages of the children: Are they now enrolled in a preschool or day care program? Type of program:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Do you hope to enroll them in a preschool program at a future date? _____

Type of program interested in: kindergarten _____

prekindergarten _____

nursery school _____

day care center _____ for child aged _____

Do you know of existing early childhood programs that can meet your children's needs? _____

Do you feel a need for an additional early childhood program in this community to meet your and your children's needs? _____

What type of program? _____

What do you feel are the most important services such a program can offer you and your child? _____

_____

_____

May I ask you your name? _____

Address _____

(Thank the person sincerely for participating in this community survey.)

28

Contract for Director/Teacher

The Board of Christian Education of _____(name)_____ Lutheran Church, _____(city)_____, _____(state)_____, herewith contracts with you _____(name)_____ to serve as _____(position)_____ in its Early Childhood Learning Center for the period beginning _____(date)_____ and ending _____(date)_____. In this position

You will be responsible for choosing the Center's curriculum with the approval of the Board of Christian Education of _____ Lutheran Church

You will be asked to assist in staffing the Center with the necessary teachers.

You will supervise the teachers and the teaching in the Center, in accordance with the policies of the Board of Christian Education.

You will purchase the necessary supplies in keeping with the budget established for the school.

You will maintain a Christian atmosphere in the Center and devote a portion of each session to the direct teaching of the word of God in a way appropriate to the developmental level of the Center's children.

You will seek ways to assist the parents of the Center's children in the nurture and training of their young children.

You will notify the chairperson of the Board of Christian Education and arrange for a qualified substitute if you should be required to be absent from your duties.

For its part the Board of Christian Education on behalf of _____ Lutheran Church, pledges itself

To support you in prayer, to be prompt in considering your requests, and to provide necessary assistance to the utmost of its ability.

To pay you _____(amount)_____ per month, payments to be made twice a month—by the 15th and 30th.

To provide for your pension, social security and medical aid payments.

To provide you with professional growth opportunities at conferences, workshops and seminars up to 3 working days annually and to pay for your travel, lodging, meals and registration costs connected with these growth opportunities, also to pay for substitute teachers needed during your attendance at these.

To provide you with up to 7 days leave of absence due to illness, and to pay for a substitute teacher for these days. For any absences of this nature beyond the 7 days, substitute teachers will be paid out of your salary.

The Board of Christian Education reserves the right to terminate this contract for cause by giving thirty (30) days written notice. You, as _____(position)_____ can terminate this contract by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the Board of Christian Education.

May the Lord our God grant you his Holy Spirit and bless your ministry in our midst.

_____(signed)_____ _____(date)_____

29

Chairperson, Board of Christian Education

_____(signed)_____

Director/Teacher

(Return one copy. Retain one for your files.)

Information for Parents

Registration: Applications for children ages three through five will be accepted. Physical examination forms and an immunization record must be submitted by parent or guardian along with the application. The registration fee is to be paid at the same time the application is submitted.

Center Hours and Costs. The Center hours vary according to the program best suited to your child's particular needs.

Mornings, 5 days a week $_____

Afternoons, 5 days a week $_____

Mornings or afternoons, 3 days a week $_____

Mornings or afternoons, 2 days a week $_____

Tuition Payments. Tuition rates will be determined annually by the Center Committee.

The tuition is payable by check only to: _____

The tuition is due the 1st day of each month and is payable no later than the 10th of each month. Throughout the school year, monthly tuition will be due one month in advance. For example, September tuition is due in August. Therefore, no tuition will be due in May, the last month of the school year.

No refunds can be made for any period of less than two weeks or for regularly scheduled holidays.

In cases of illness extending beyond two weeks, half of the tuition will be refunded upon application to the Center director. Instead of a cash refund, the money may be applied to the following month's tuition payment.

During periods of absences extending beyond two weeks, students may remain enrolled by payment of half tuition.

If a student leaves the Center prior to the first day of May, the tuition for the month of May will be refunded in its entirety.

When a student is withdrawn from enrollment, a 30-day advance notice shall be given to the Director. This will allow the Director to contact those on the waiting list.

The registration fee is collected annually and is not refundable and not applicable to tuition.

Holidays: Information on holidays will be posted.

Snacks: A nutrition snack will be served during each session at no extra charge.

Daily Health Inspection: According to state law, an adult must bring the child to the person designated (in this case, to the teacher) for a brief health check. The adult must stay until the inspection is over. A child sent home due to illness must remain out for at least 24 hours or have a doctor's permission slip to return to the Center.

Authorization to Pick Up Child: The Center staff must have written authorization from a parent for any person other than the parent to pick up the child. This applies also to those children riding in a car pool.

Clothing: The best clothes for the children to wear are comfortable play clothes which encourage self help (no belts or snaps but elastic waist bands). A change of clothes should be brought to the Center and clearly labeled with your child's name.

30

Show and Tell: Children should not bring their own toys to the Center. Occasionally children will be asked to bring a nature object, vacation memento, etc., to show the other children.

Opening and Closing Time: Please observe our designated times for opening and closing a session. Teachers need time before and after sessions to prepare for the next session. There will be a late charge of $.50 for each 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time.

Serving Parents: Look for information in the monthly church paper regarding meetings for parents, parent-teacher conferences, the lending library and special events scheduled in the congregation.

Enrollment Form

First Lutheran Early Childhood Learning Center
Cross Roads, New Mexico

ENROLLMENT: Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri. (circle days attending)

Child's name _____ Birth date _____

Home address _____

Father's Name _____

Business address _____ phone _____

Mother's name _____ nee _____ (maiden name)

Business address _____ phone _____

Guardian's name (if other than the above) _____

_____, _____ (relationship)

Business address _____ phone _____

Has child been baptized? _____ When? _____ Where? _____

Church of which child is a member _____

Church address _____

Name of person to be called in case of need _____

_____, _____ (relationship)

Address _____ phone _____

Physician (to be called in an emergency) _____

Address _____

If this physician cannot be reached, what action should be taken: Emergency hospital? _____ Other _____

Special remarks concerning the child _____

_____

_____

Name of persons authorized to take your child from the Center (child will not be allowed to leave with any other person without written authorization from the responsible parent or guardian):

_____ Relationship _____

_____ Relationship _____

Signature of parent or guardian _____ Date _____

Signature of parent or guardian _____ Date _____

For Center use:
Date of Admission _____ Date of Discharge _____

Note: This information must be kept current and immediately available in the Center at all times.

Family and Social History

Family Name _____ Date _____

Father _____ Mother _____

Children

Name Age Grade in School Health

_____

_____

_____

_____

Marital status of child's parents:

Married, living together _____ Separated _____ Divorced _____ Other _____

Church Preference: Father _____ Mother _____

Name and Address of Church (or Churches) in which membership is held: _____

_____

Was child baptized? _____ Where? _____ When? _____

List other members of household besides immediate family:

Name Relationship Age

_____

_____

Does child have room alone? _____ Or with whom? _____

Type of housing: House _____ Duplex or flat _____ Apartment _____ Other _____

How does child get along with

Parents? _____

Brothers and sisters? _____

Other children in the neighborhood? _____

Other members in household? _____

Has child had group-play experiences? _____

Has child received extensive care by other than parents? _____ By whom?

_____

_____

In own home? _____ Outside home? _____

Does child need help in

Dressing? ___ Undressing? ___ Washing hands? ___ Toilet? ___ Eating? ___

Does child have any special problems or fears? _____

_____

Signed _____

32